

WASHINGTON – The RESTORE Act has cleared the U.S. House and is now headed to the Senate where it is also expected to pass, U.S. Rep. Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, said Friday.

Congressman Bonner was an original cosponsor of the RESTORE Act and worked closely with House negotiators to ensure that its provisions were retained in the transportation conference report that passed the House 373 to 52 Friday.

"This is a banner day for the Gulf Coast as the RESTORE Act is soon to become law and the coastal communities affected by the Deepwater Horizon spill are poised to receive long-awaited economic and environmental restoration funds," Congressman Bonner observed after the final House vote.

"More than two years after the tragic Gulf oil spill, BP and the Justice Department are still negotiating the amount of fines that the oil company and other parties involved in the largest environmental disaster to strike our shores will have to pay the federal government.

"Under the RESTORE Act, 80 percent of the future Clean Water Act fines paid by BP and others in connection with Deepwater Horizon will be steered back to those areas where the greatest harm was done – the Gulf Coast.

"There is little question that the impact of the April 2010 oil spill will be felt along our shores and in our coastal communities for years to come. However, the RESTORE Act offers the potential for renewed economic prosperity and environmental restoration to offset the regional losses we have suffered.

"The passage of the RESTORE Act is a victory for coastal Alabama and the Gulf region which have been given a once in a lifetime opportunity to set a new course for economic prosperity and growth," Congressman Bonner noted.

The RESTORE Act passed the House Friday as part of the Surface Transportation Extension

Act of 2012. The legislation is now headed to the Senate for final passage.

For release: June 29, 2012